

about our energy and national security. Despite our record domestic production of crude oil, I believe it is irresponsible to use a vital national energy security asset as a budget gimmick.

Besides the fact that the math simply doesn't add up, I philosophically oppose the increasing tendency of the federal government to reallocate money intended for one purpose to then fund unrelated policy initiatives. It is disingenuous and irresponsible. And in the case of the surface transportation bill funding mechanisms, this approach is symptomatic of a larger problem.

The Highway Trust Fund was designed to be funded primarily through a user pays, user benefits model in the form of the federal gas tax. The increased fuel efficiency of vehicles, in conjunction with several policy and regulatory factors, has gradually eroded the gas tax's ability to keep pace with investment demands over time.

Mr. Speaker, it is critical that we begin work now to modernize the funding formula for the Highway Trust Fund and return to a user pays model. The longer we turn a blind eye towards addressing the user fee model, which has not been adjusted since 1993, and continue to ignore the need to build a 21st century funding mechanism reflective of the technological advancements at our disposal, the more fearful I am of passing a sustainable, long term investment to address our nation's ailing infrastructure in the future.

I applaud the chamber on its work to pass this 5-year bill, and I look forward to continuing work to ensure the next bill is more fiscally responsible, adhering to a paid for measure more closely aligned to a user pay, user benefit system.

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTERS REFORM AND IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers Reform and Improvement Act (H.R. 3842). This bipartisan bill will codify and reauthorize the duties and responsibilities of Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETCs). FLETCs improve domestic preparedness, prevention, and response to terrorism by providing basic and advanced training to federal employees involved in federal law enforcement activities or homeland security operations. I am proud that this important national security work occurs in several locations across the country, including in my home state of New Mexico.

However, I have concerns about one particular provision within H.R. 3842: The ability for FLETCs to offer state and local law enforcement agencies training, which is meant for federal security personnel. Although I strongly believe that federal security personnel need to coordinate and work closely with state and local law enforcement agencies to prepare, prevent, and respond to terrorism, I have grave concerns with the ability of community

police departments to have complete and unrestricted access to military-style training at FLETCs.

For example, the Albuquerque Police Department (APD) has access to every Department of Energy National Training Center (NTC) class, which are intended for federal law enforcement personnel to protect our nation's nuclear materials. APD has completed dozens of DOE-instructed classes, including lessons on "vehicle ambush," "tactical leadership assault executions," and "how to lead a small element in a combat situation." The U.S. Department of Justice is currently reviewing APD's use of NTC classes, resources, and facilities.

I encourage FLETCs to enact sensible oversight mechanisms and restrictions on state and local law enforcement access to FLETC resources and facilities. FLETCs should have criteria to determine what training topics or classes, if any, are appropriate for state and local law enforcement. FLETCs should also consider the duty assignments and responsibilities of individual officers when determining allowing access. In addition, police departments under a Department of Justice consent decree for violating the constitutional rights of Americans or departments with a history of excessive or unnecessary force, should not receive military-style training provided by FLETCs.

I will continue to work with the Administration on strengthening the mission of FLETCs and on ensuring that state and local law enforcement have appropriate access.

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND TERRORIST TRAVEL PREVENTION ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 158, the Visa Waiver Program Improvement Act. I agree that Congress has a responsibility to carefully examine the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) and to take appropriate steps to improve the program and ensure our national security.

Yet I am concerned that this bill would allow for the arbitrary discrimination of individuals based on their nationality. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, the language contained in H.R. 158 is written so broadly that all nationals of Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan would have their VWP revoked, even if they have never resided or traveled to Iraq or Syria and only have nationality for those countries as a result of their parents.

This bill would also terminate VWP travel privileges for anyone who has been in Iraq and Syria at any time on or after March 1, 2011, including those traveling to Iraq and Syria for professional purposes. This includes anyone from a journalist to a humanitarian aid worker. Congress can take steps to improve the program and ensure our national security without putting in place blanket provisions that allow for the discrimination of individuals based on their nationality. I look forward to working with my colleagues to address these issues as this legislation moves forward.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2130, RED RIVER PRIVATE PROPERTY PROTECTION ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CON- SIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule for H.R. 2130, the "Red River Private Property Protection Act."

The President has announced that this bill will be vetoed in the event it reaches his desk.

With just one legislative day before the current continuing resolution expires on December 11, we should be focusing all of our time and attention on matters that address the real problems and major concerns of the American people.

And right now the American people are very concerned about the harm and threat posed by "lone wolf" and "franchise terrorists" that we saw in Paris last month and just last week in San Bernardino, California.

These tragedies follow on the heels of mass shootings in Tucson, Aurora, Sandy Hook, Charleston, Chattanooga, Roseburg, Colorado Springs, and now, most recently, in San Bernardino, California.

These senseless mass shootings remind us of the imperative of ending gun violence in our country.

It is past time that we come together united by our common humanity and with this simple message: the violence must stop.

And there are actions that can be taken to reduce gun violence beginning with the enactment of the bipartisan "Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Public Act of 2015" (H.R. 1076).

This bipartisan legislation, which I am proud to co-sponsor, would close the dangerous loophole that allows terrorist suspects to legally buy deadly weapons.

H.R. 1076 would bar the sale or distribution of firearms to any individual whom the Attorney General has determined to be engaged in terrorist activities.

Mr. Speaker, if a person is considered by the federal government too dangerous to board an airplane or to enter the United States, he or she surely is too dangerous to be permitted to purchase or obtain a firearm.

It is unconscionable that we have not acted to close the loophole in federal law that permits a terrorist lawfully to obtain and carry firearms.

Mr. Speaker, according to a report by the Government Accountability Office, since 2004 more than 2,000 suspects on the FBI's Terrorist Watchlist have successfully purchased weapons in the United States.

It is simply intolerable that more than 90 percent of all suspected terrorists who attempted to purchase guns in the last 11 years walked away with the weapon they wanted, with just 190 rejected despite their ominous histories.

To close this loophole, I call upon Speaker RYAN to bring H.R. 1076 to the floor immediately.

H.R. 1076 grants the Attorney General the authority to deny a firearms license to individuals for whom there is a reasonable belief that